

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1, 36, and 43 are amended herein. All pending claims and their present status are produced below.

- 1 29. (Currently amended) A method for use in a detector device for controlling access to
- 2 information on a network including a plurality of interconnected devices, the detector
- 3 device coupled to the network between a first device and a second device, the method
- 4 comprising:
 - 5 monitoring, independent of the first device and the second device, a plurality of
 - 6 request signals for data between the first device and the second device in the
 - 7 network, at least one request signal including a user identification parameter;
 - 8 determining whether a user identified by the user identification parameter in the
 - 9 request signal is permitted access to the data;
 - 10 comparing a predetermined parameter associated with the user with a pre-determined
 - 11 parameter associated with the data to determine permission to access the data;
 - 12 in response to the comparison, providing a response to the request signal; and
 - 13 in response to an operational failure within the detector device, allowing the plurality
 - 14 of request signals to pass uninterrupted between the first device and the
 - 15 second device.
- 1 30. (Previously presented) A method of controlling access of claim 29, wherein the
- 2 provided response comprises allowing access to the data when the predetermined
- 3 parameter associated with the user is greater than or equal to a predetermined
- 4 parameter associated with the data.

1 31. (Previously presented) A method of controlling access of claim 29, wherein the
2 provided response comprises allowing access to the data when the predetermined
3 parameter associated with the user is less than or equal to a predetermined parameter
4 associated with the data.

1 32. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the provided response
2 comprises re-directing the data signal to a third device in response to the
3 predetermined parameter associated with the user being less than the predetermined
4 value associated with the data, the third device allowing for a re-setting of the
5 predetermined parameter to a new parameter comprising a value greater than or equal
6 to the predetermined parameter associated with the data.

1 33. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the predetermined parameter
2 is one from a group comprising a positive monetary value, a positive time value, a
3 bandwidth value, a quality of service value, and a content rating.

1 34. (Previously presented) The method of claim 33, further comprising allowing access to
2 one from a group comprised of voice data, video data, and a real-time application in
3 response to at least one of the bandwidth value or quality of service value being
4 greater than or equal to a threshold parameter.

1 35. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, further comprising providing access
2 to a second data that does not require a parameter value in response to either the
3 predetermined parameter associated with the user being less than or equal to the
4 predetermined parameter associated with the data or the user not having permission to
5 access the data corresponding to the request signal.

1 36. (Currently amended) A network-based billing method on a detector device for
2 providing access to resources on a network, the detector device coupled to the
3 network such that the detector device does not introduce a point of failure if the
4 detector device becomes inoperable, the method comprising:
5 monitoring, independent from the resources, a data signal from a device on a network,
6 the data signal including a request for a resource;
7 identifying a value for accessing the resource;
8 associating a user identification with the data signal;
9 determining whether a user identified by the user identification is permitted access to
10 the resource;
11 identifying a credit balance for the user identification;
12 comparing the credit balance with the value to determine access to the resource;
13 in response to the comparison, determining a response to the request; and
14 in response to an operational failure within the detector device, allowing the data
15 signals to pass uninterrupted between the resources on the network.

1 37. (Previously presented) The network-based billing method of claim 36, further
2 comprising allowing access to the resource in response to the credit balance being
3 less than or equal to the cost preventing access to the resource.

1 38. (Previously presented) The network-based billing method of claim 36, further
2 comprising allowing access to the resource in response to the credit balance being
3 greater than or equal to the cost preventing access to the resource.

1 39. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, further comprising re-directing the
2 data signal to a second resource in response to the credit balance being less than the
3 cost, the second resource configured to allow for increasing the credit balance.

1 40. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, further comprising providing access
2 to a second resource having no cost in response to the credit balance being less than
3 the cost.

1 41. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, wherein the cost comprises one from
2 a group comprising a monetary value, a quality of service value, a bandwidth value, a
3 time value, and a content rating value.

1 42. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, further comprising passing the data
2 signal to a second device having the resource.

1 43. (Currently amended) A detector device to control access to information on a network
2 including a plurality of interconnected devices, the device comprising:
3 a processing unit within a detector device coupled to the network between a first
4 device and a second device, the detector device independent of the first device
5 and the second device, the processing unit configured to execute instructions,
6 the instructions including,
7 monitoring a plurality of request signals for data between the first device and
8 the second device in the network, at least one request signal including
9 a user identification parameter;

determining whether a user identified by the user identification parameter in a request signal of the plurality of request signals is permitted access to the data;

comparing a predetermined parameter associated with the user with a predetermined parameter associated with the data to determine permission to access the data;

providing a response to the request signal of the plurality of request signals in response to the comparison; and

allowing the plurality of request signals to pass uninterrupted between the first device and the second device in response to an operational failure within the detector device.

1 44. (Previously presented) The device of claim 43, wherein processor is further
2 configured to execute instructions comprising providing the response by allowing
3 access to the data when the predetermined parameter associated with the user is
4 greater than or equal to a predetermined parameter associated with the data.

1 45. (Previously presented) The device of claim 43, wherein processor is further
2 configured to execute instructions comprising the response by allowing access to the
3 data when the predetermined parameter associated with the user is less than or equal
4 to a predetermined parameter associated with the data.

1 46. (Previously presented) The device of claim 43, wherein processor is further
2 configured to execute instructions comprising providing the response by re-directing
3 the data signal to a third device in response to the predetermined parameter associated
4 with the user being less than the predetermined value associated with the data, the

5 third device allowing for a re-setting of the predetermined parameter to a new
6 parameter comprising a value greater than or equal to the predetermined parameter
7 associated with the data.

1 47. (Previously presented) The device of claim 43, wherein the predetermined parameter
2 is one from a group comprising a positive monetary value, a positive time value, a
3 bandwidth value, a quality of service value, and a content rating.

1 48. (Previously presented) The device of claim 47, further comprising allowing access to
2 one from a group comprised of voice data, video data, and a real-time application in
3 response to at least one of the bandwidth value or quality of service value being
4 greater than or equal to a threshold parameter.